

## *Federal Stimulus Funding*

Thursday, August 20, 2009

### **Biden, Sebelius Announce \$1.2B in Grants for Health IT Adoption**



Today, Vice President Biden and HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced nearly \$1.2 billion in grants to help health care providers implement electronic health record systems, the [AP/Hartford Courant](#) reports.

The funding is part of the \$787 billion federal economic stimulus package (Elliott, [AP/Hartford Courant](#), 8/20).

National Coordinator for Health IT David Blumenthal joined Biden and Sebelius for the announcement at Mount Sinai Hospital in Chicago. The three officials also held a dialogue session on health care with the hospital's physicians, nurses and administrators ([AP/Chicago Tribune](#), 8/20).

According to a [statement issued by Biden's office](#), \$598 million of the grant will be allocated to establish 70 health IT centers to help providers acquire EHRs, and \$564 million has been set aside to develop a national health IT network ([Reuters/New York Times](#), 8/20). The grants will be made available after the start of the new fiscal year on Oct. 1.

#### **HHS E-Mail**

In a message sent to e-mail subscribers on Thursday, HHS Office of Health Reform Director Jeanne Lambrew highlighted the benefits of health IT and EHRs and compared them with the current paper-based records system.

She wrote, "All that paperwork is more than just annoying," adding, "It wastes time, prevents quick and accurate diagnoses and makes our health care system less efficient. And it simply doesn't make sense in today's digital age."

The e-mail included a [link to a video](#), which highlighted Sebelius' trip to a Nebraska medical facility that uses EHRs ([AP/Hartford Courant](#), 8/20).